Mr. *Dickinſon's*

SERMON

ON THE

Witneſs of the SPIRIT.

BRITISH MUSEUM

The Witneſs of the SPIRIT.

A SERMON Preached at *Newark* IN NEW-JERSEY,

May 7th. 1740.

Wherein is diſtinctly ſhewn, in what Way and Manner the *Spirit himſelf beareth Witneſs* to the Adoption of the Children of GOD.

On Occaſion of a wonderful Progreſs of converting Grace in thoſe Parts.

By *Jonathan Dickinſon*, M. A.

Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Elizabeth Town* in *New-Jerſey*.

Gal. iv. 6 *And becauſe ye are Sons, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying Abba Father.*

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BRITISH MUSEUM

The Witneſs of the SPIRIT of GOD to the ADOPTION of his Children.

ROM. VIII. 16.

The Spirit it ſelf beareth Witneſs with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God.

EVERY individual Perſon of this numerous Audience that are here before the Lord, are going into an eternal State, where they muſt be unſpeakably happy, or intolerably miſerable throughout an endleſs and unchangeable Duration. Such of my Hearers as have a ſaving Intereſt in Chriſt by Faith, and are *created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good Works, that they walk in them*, have an undoubted Title to *the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*; and ſhall certainly ſpend a bleſſed Eternity, in the enjoyment of what *Eye has not ſeen, nor Ear heard, nor has entred into the Heart of Man.* But they who are in a State of Impenitence and Unbelief, under the Power of their Luſts, and Guilt of their Sins, are all of them Heirs of eternal Perdition; and if they continue

continue in their preſent State, muſt eternally lament their dreadful Condition among Devils and damned Spirits, where *the Smoke of their Torments muſt aſcend for ever and ever, and they have no Reſt Day nor Night.* Since therefore we are all Candidates for Heaven or Hell, for eternal Salvation or eternal Damnation; and our State muſt be quickly fixed beyond poſſibility of Change or Alteration for ever; it is of infinite Concernment, that we don't deceive our ſelves in an Affair of ſuch unutterable Conſequence, and that we ben't aſhamed of our Hope when it's too late to rectify the fatal Miſtake.

But what Security can we obtain that may be ſafely depended upon, in this State of Darkneſs and Ignorance, Temptation, and Imperfection? How ſhall our Foundation be ſo laid, that we may with Joy and Comfort expect the laſt deciſive Trial? The Words of our Text are an Anſwer to this Demand. They ſet before us a clear & ſafe Evidence of our good Eſtate; and ſhew us how we ſhall know *what is the Hope of our Calling, and what is our Title to the Riches of the Glory of an Inheritance with the Saints.* We are ſafe, if we have *the Spirit it ſelf witneſſing with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God.* This therefore we are concerned to ſeek, with a moſt earneſt and aſſiduous Application. Without this we ſhould by no Means content and ſatisfy our ſelves, ſince there is ſo much depending upon it.

Let me then endeavour to aſſiſt you in the purſuit of this bleſſed Attainment, by conſidering the following Things.

I. What we are to underſtand by *the Spirit it ſelf.*

II. How the Spirit *beareth witneſs with our Spirit,* that we are the Children of God.

Under which Head, I ſhall take Occaſion to conſider, whether all the Children of God have a clear and ſatisfying Evidence of their Adoption.

And then

III. Conclude with ſome Improvement.

I. Then

I. Then, I am to conſider, what we are to underſtand *by the Spirit it ſelf.*

To this I anſwer in one Word,

We are hereby to underſtand the *Holy Ghoſt*, the third Perſon in the adorable Trinity; the ſame God, in all the Perfections of his infinite Nature, with the Father and the Son. --- I may here remark, that the Words before us might be more properly rendred, *the Spirit himſelf.* For this is not only agreable with the Original; but more directly leads our Minds to contemplate the Perſonality of the bleſſed Spirit, here ſpoken of. 'Tis he himſelf, that is the eternal God, that is of the ſame Nature & Eſſence with the other Perſons of the God-Head, who muſt work all the good Pleaſure of his Goodneſs in our Souls, who muſt begin and carry on the Work of Grace in us, if ever we are ſanctified; and he himſe alſo muſt give us the comforting View of his own gracious Operations; muſt confirm and eſtabliſh us, by enabling us to ſee the Evidence of this gracious Change, if ever we find *Joy and Peace in believing.*

II. I am to conſider how the Spirit himſelf *beareth witneſs with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God.*

Now that I may ſet this in a clear Light, it will be proper to obſerve to you, that there are two Ways by which the holy Spirit beareth this witneſs with the Spirit of a Believer: the one ordinary, mediate and common to the moſt, if not all true Believers; the other extraordinary, immediate and leſs common, even to thoſe that are the ſincere Children of God. It may be proper to conſider each of theſe diſtinctly.

1. Then, the *Spirit beareth witneſs with our Spirit*, in a more ORDINARY and MEDIATE Way, that we are the Children of God.

I ſhall mention ſome of thoſe ordinary Means and Methods, by which the Spirit witneſſeth our Adoption; and by which we may obtain the moſt clear and ſatisfying Evidences of it.

And I ſhall firſt obſerve, that one of the ordinary Means, by which the Spirit beareth witneſs in our favour, is the *Word* of God. The bleſſed Book of God contains the immediate Dictates of his Holy Spirit. *All Scripture is given by Inſpiration of God; and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs, that the Man of God may be perfect*, 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Whatſoever therefore is written in the divine Oracles, is witneſſed by the Spirit himſelf; for he is the Author of them. And we muſt receive nothing as the *witneſs of the Spirit*, which is not agreable to this ſure and infallible Standard, and only ſufficient Rule of Faith and Practice. By this Rule we muſt try our State, and all our Qualifications for future Glory. By this Rule we muſt diſcover all ſorts of falſe Confidences and vain Hopes, in our ſelves and others. *If any Man or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Goſpel to you, let him be accurſed.* If any Man pretend to any Qualifications, Experiences, or ſpiritual Impreſſions, as neceſſary to our Comfort and Safety, which are not conſonant to, or warranted by theſe Oracles of Truth, we have no buſineſs to regard them or take any notice of them. This is a Caution well worthy of our ſpecial Attention in theſe preſent Times. As the Spirit of God has been in a glorious Manner diſplaying his Power and Goodneſs, in exciting a ſolemn Inquiry after the Way of Salvation in many of our People in theſe Parts of the World, we muſt not wonder if the Adverſary ſhould ſow Tares among the Wheat. We muſt not be ſtumbled at it, if we meet with ſome Pretenſions to ſpiritual Influences, which want a new Bible for their juſtification. *We muſt not believe every Spirit; but try the Spi-*

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rits, whether they be of God, 1 Joh. iv. 1. And how ſhall we try them, but by the Word of God? This we know to be the Witneſs of the Spirit himſelf; and thence we alſo know, that whoever *ſpeak not according to this Word, it is becauſe they have no Light in them.* Iſa. viii. 20 --- We have no Cauſe to be diſtreſſed by any new Lights, or new Pretences, that are not to be found in the Bible; nor any Cauſe to quiet ourſelves with any imaginary Attainments, which are not there repreſented as the ſure Marks and Characters of a Child of God. If the Spirit of God does by the Scriptures witneſs in our Favour, we are out of Danger of miſcarrying. If he there witneſſeth againſt us, we can have no grounded Hope of Salvation, whatever Pretences we may make, whatever Experiences we may boaſt of.

I may further obſerve to you, that another ordinary and mediate Way by which *the Spirit himſelf beareth Witneſs with our Spirit*, is by his *ſanctifying* and *renewing Influences* upon our Hearts. If we are *renewed in the Spirit of our Mind*; if *old Things are paſſed away, and all Things are become new* in our Souls; if we have *put on the new Man, which is renewed in Knowledge, after the Image of him that created us*; we have then the *witneſs of the Spirit himſelf* to our Adoption. Such a Change as this cannot be the Production of any created Power; but muſt be the powerful Operation of the *Spirit himſelf*, and is a better Witneſs in our Favour, than if an Angel from Heaven ſhould teſtify to us our Title to the Kingdom of God. I would here therefore take Liberty to be ſomething diſtinct and particular, in ſetting before you what are theſe ſanctifying Influences of the bleſſed Spirit, by which he beareth Witneſs that we are the Children of God.

The firſt Thing wrought in the Heart of a Sinner, in order to his Converſion to God, is a *Conviction of*

his Sin and *Miſery*, and a *deep Impreſſion of his dangerous periſhing Circumſtance*, whilſt an Enemy to God, and an Heir of eternal Perdition. ---- While Sinners are in an Eſtate of carnal Security, they will not *know* and conſider *the Things of their Peace*, they will not endeavour to *flee from the Wrath to come*, nor to *lay hold on the Hope ſet before them*. No Means will prevail with them, no Arguments will perſuade them to *come to Chriſt, that they might have Life*. This is a ſad Truth, open to our continual Obſervation & Experience. We ſee a poor ſecure World going on boldly in the Paths of Deſtruction and Death, notwithſtanding all the Terrors of the Law of God, notwithſtanding all the faithful Warnings of the Miniſters of Chriſt, and all the ſhocking Diſpenſations of Providence. What an aſtoniſhing Thought is this! Can rational Creatures caſt themſelves down the dreadful Precipice with their Eyes open! Can they run upon the flaming Sword, when it's brandiſhed before their Breaſts! Can they venture upon Hell & eternal Damnation, without Care or Fear! When ſeriouſly conſider'd, it ſeems impoſſible: and yet it's obvious to every Obſerver, that this is the Conduct of the far greateſt Part of the World of Mankind; and it will continue to be the Conduct of every unconverted Sinner, until the Spirit of God opens their Eyes, ſets their Danger in View, and awakens them out of this ſtupid and dead State. It is accordingly the firſt Operation of the bleſſed Spirit in order to a Sinner's Sanctification, to *convince him of Sin*. (Joh. xvi 8) This he ſometimes does more *ſuddenly*; and by a more *forceable Impreſſion*, filling the Soul with the greateſt Agony & Diſtreſs, from the moſt lively Views of his aggravated Sins, and of the amazing Wrath of God. This alarms all the Powers and Paſſions of the Soul, *pricks* the poor Sinner *to the Heart*, with St. *Peter's* Hearers (*Acts* ii. 37.) cauſeth him to *tremble* with the *Jailor* (Acts xvi. 29) to

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tremble and be aſtoniſhed with *Saul* at his Converſion. (*Acts* ix. 6.) -- But in others theſe Convictions are more *gradually* brought on; and with *lower Degrees* of Terror and Amazement. Theſe have ſuch a Senſe of their Sin and Danger, as makes them in earneſt inquire *what they ſhall do to be ſaved*, tho' they do not approach ſo near to Deſperation, from the aſtoniſhing Proſpect of their dreadful Deſerts. Some Sinners agonize *long* under theſe Diſtreſſes, before they can find Reſt in Chriſt. Others are *ſooner* brought to act Faith in him; and to the comfortable Evidences of it. But all muſt hereby be brought to ſuch a diſcovery of their Guilt & Miſery, that they can no longer reſt in their preſent Condition; nor be eaſy without an Intereſt in Chriſt and the Favour of God.

And now my Brethren! It's your Buſineſs to conſider, whether you have had this *witneſs of the Spirit with your Spirit*, or not. If you have been thus awaken'd out of your carnal Security, you have the Teſtimony of *the Spirit himſelf*, that he has begun a good Work in you. It is true, that this is no certain Evidence of a ſanctifying Change. Many have been brought thus far, that have worn off theſe Impreſſions; and return'd to Folly, like *a Dog to his Vomit, and like the Sow that was waſhed to her wallowing in the Mire.* And it therefore infinitely concerns you to take Care, that you don't *begin in the Spirit*, and *end in the Fleſh*; that you don't *quench the Spirit of God*; and cauſe him to withdraw, and leave you to your former Security and Stupidity. But as for ſuch of you that have had no Experience of theſe awak'ning Influences of the bleſſed Spirit, the Caſe is at once determined againſt you. There needs no other Evidence, that you are yet in your Sins, and under a dreadful Sentence of Death and Condemnation.

Another Method of the Spirit is by his *humbling* and *Soul-abaſing* Influences. --- A Sinner muſt be bro't out of himſelf, or he will never fly to Chriſt for Refuge, and receive him upon his own Terms. Convictions will awaken him to a ſolemn Concern about his State; will drive him to Duty, and produce a Reformation of his external Behaviour. But it's too common that theſe Attainments quiet the Conſcience, and procure Peace to the Soul, ſhort of an Intereſt in Chriſt, and a real ſanctifying Change of Heart & Life. But if the Spirit of God carry on his Work to purpoſe, he will bring the convinced Sinner to ſee the infinite Defect of all his Performances and of all his Attainments, of all his Duties, Reformations, Promiſes, religious Frames, and moral Carriages, and of all he does or can do, to render him acceptable to God. He will bring him to ſee, that he is undone, and cannot help himſelf; and that he is utterly unworthy that God ſhould help him. He will bring him to ſee, that it is a wonder of God's Patience that he is out of Hell; and that it will be a Wonder indeed of ſovereign free Grace, if ſuch a polluted guilty Rebel finally eſcapes eternal Ruin. He will bring him to lie at God's Footſtool, as a guilty condemned Malefactor with the Halter about his Neck, having nothing to plead in his own Favour, nothing to depend upon, but abuſed and forfeited Grace and Mercy.---Convinced Sinners commonly ſtruggle a great while to get out of their Diſtreſſes by ſome *ſelf righteous Attempt* or other. One while they'l make *Promiſes*, and take up Reſolutions to watch their Hearts, and to reform their Lives: but alas! they find their Hearts are an inexhauſtible Fountain of Corruption, which they cannot cleanſe; Their Luſts get the Victory over all their good Deſigns and ſtrongeſt Reſolutions. Then they'l be ready to fly to *Duty*; and perhaps add new Duties to their old Courſes; and hope by theſe

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to recommend themſelves to God. But here alſo their Confidence withers away; they find ſo much deadneſs and dulneſs, ſo many ſinful Thoughts and ſtraying Affections in their beſt Peformances, that they cannot hope for Safety from this Refuge. In this Diſtreſs, they'l perhaps be ready to flatter themſelves with Safety from their *Convictions*, from a Senſe of their Vileneſs and Miſery. They vainly hope that ſuch Diſtreſs for their Sins, ſuch Sorrow and Mourning, ſuch earneſt Deſires of deliverance from their guilty periſhing State, will move God to pity and relieve 'em. But alas! this Bed alſo will be found too ſhort to ſtretch themſelves upon. The bleſſed Spirit will ſtill make them ſenſible that their Convictions, legal Terrors, and Senſe of their own vileneſs and ſinfulneſs, will no more ſerve to juſtify them in the Sight of God, than their Reſolutions, their Reformations, or their Duties. And what ſhall they do in this Caſe? They now ſee that there is *no Refuge* but CHRIST only; and to Him they would therefore repair, were it not for the ſame *ſelf-righteous* Principles ſtill obtaining in them. They would commit their Souls to Chriſt for Salvation; but they can't think he will receive ſuch poor guilty ſinful Creatures as they are: They have hard Hearts, and corrupt Affections: They have not been ſufficiently convinced of their Sins, or not ſufficiently humbled: They have not the neceſſary Qualifications for coming to Chriſt and believing in him; and are therefore yet ſtriving in their own Strength to obtain ſome Preparations, ſome Fitneſs of Soul for coming to Chriſt. But the Spirit of God won't leave thoſe he deſigns for Mercy, in theſe unhappy Toils. He'll ſhew 'em, that they are not to hope, that the Caſe will ever be better, by any Thing they do or can do; that they neither have, nor ever will have any *Qualifications* at all to *recommend* them to Chriſt; that it's in vain to ſtrive with their own Hearts, in vain to work in their own Strength, or with a de-

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pendance on Creature-Helps. *In vain is Salvation hoped for from the Hills, or Multitude of Mountains.* He will ſhew them, that they juſtly deſerve to periſh; and cannot help themſelves: that if ever they come to Chriſt at all, they muſt come as they are, *wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked*; that if ever he ſaves them, he muſt have all the Glory; and that the whole of their Salvation muſt be aſcribed to the Riches of his infinite free Grace and ſovereign Mercy, to helpleſs, unworthy, periſhing Sinners.--- If my Hearers would now *apply* this to *themſelves*, it may ſhew them, whether they have this *Witneſs of the Spirit*, in their Favour, or not. If you are thus humbled, and brought to the Foot of God's ſovereign Grace; if you have had this diſcovery of your own ſpiritual Impotency, of your deſert of God's Wrath, and of your juſt expoſedneſs to periſh, notwithſtanding all your own Refuges that you can poſſibly betake your ſelves to; it is the *Spirit himſelf* that has thus humbled you. It is He that has knock'd all your falſe Foundations from under your Feet, and has given you this humbling View of your loſt Condition. And tho' the greateſt Degree of Humiliation alone is not a ſufficient Evidence of a ſaving Converſion to God, it is however the *Witneſs of the Spirit himſelf* of ſuch a good Work begun in your Soul, without which you could never be ſaved; and by which there is a hopeful Proſpect, that you will be brought to give up your ſelves to Chriſt, and depend upon his Righteouſneſs only for Juſtification and eternal Salvation. *Bleſſed are the poor in Spirit; for theirs is the Kingdom of God. The Hungry ſhall be filled with good Things, while the Rich are ſent away empty. He will deliver the Needy, when he crieth; the Poor alſo, and him that hath no Helper.* But how lamentable, how dreadfully dangerous is the State of thoſe of whom it may be ſaid, that *they are not humbled unto this Day!* Whatever Attainments theſe may have, whatever

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Confidence they may entertain, they will quickly be convinced, that their Hopes are built upon the Sand, and muſt fall before the approaching Tempeſt.

I proceed to ſhew you in the next Place, that the *Spirit of God* does in an eſpecial manner *bear Witneſs* to our Adoption, by working in us *a lively Faith in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* We read in *Gal.* iii. 26. that *we are all the Children of God by Faith in Jeſus Chriſt.* If therefore the Senſe of our indigent helpleſs and hopeleſs Eſtate in our ſelves, which I have deſcribed, brings us to look to the Fulneſs and Sufficiency that there is in *Chriſt*, to receive him upon his own Terms, as revealed in the Goſpel, and to depend upon him only as the *Author of our eternal Salvation*; we have therein good Evidence of a glorious Change wrought in us by the Spirit of God, and that *we are the Children of God*; for we are ſuch *by Faith in Jeſus Chriſt.*

This, my Brethren, is the great Concern, this the grand Point that we ſhould be eſpecially careful to clear up to ourſelves. If this Foundation be well laid, we are happy for ever: But a Miſtake here is the eternal Loſs of our immortal Souls. Have we been bro't to yield our unfeigned Aſſent to Goſpel-Truths, and our unfeigned Conſent to Goſpel-Terms, and to *live by the Faith of the Son of God?* Have we been brought to *rejoyce in Chriſt Jeſus, and to have no Confidence in the Fleſh?* Have we *eſteem'd all Things as Loſs and Dung, in Compariſon of Chriſt, that we may be found in him, not having our own Righteouſneſs which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Chriſt, the Righteouſneſs which is of God by Faith?* Have we valued an Intereſt in Chriſt above all the World; and choſen Him for the Portion of our Souls? Have we received the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in all his Offices, and for all his Benefits? Have we depended only upon the Influences of his bleſſed Spirit, to renew, ſanctify and quicken us;

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and upon his Righteouſneſs alone, to juſtify us in the Sight of God? Have we ſubmitted to him as our Lord, as well as our Saviour? Is his Throne ſet up in our Hearts; and do all the Powers of our Souls bow down to him? Do we deſire him as our Saviour from future Sin, as well as from paſt Guilt; from the Pollution and Dominion, as well as from the damning Effects of our Luſts? In a Word, Do we depend upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to be *of God made unto us Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption*? Do we depend upon him to do all in us, all for us; and to be all to us? And do we conſtantly in the ſolemn Practice of all religious Duties, thus commit our Souls to him as the *Lord our Righteouſneſs*; and as the only Foundation of our Hope for eternal Salvation? Do we lament the Imperfections of our Faith, and all the Actings of Unbelief in our Hearts; and do we repair to this great Advocate to interceed for us, and cover the Defects of our Graces and Services, as well as of our Perſons? --- Happy beyond Compariſon is that Perſon, who upon an impartial Trial can find theſe Operations of a ſaving Faith in his Soul. It is the *Spirit himſelf*, that has *according to his abundant Mercy, begotten him again to a lively Hope*; and he has a Witneſs from Heaven to his Adoption & Juſtification; a Witneſs that cannot poſſibly deceive him. He may depend upon it, that *He which hath begun this good Work in him, will perform it unto the Day of Jeſus Chriſt*. The Match is concluded between Chriſt and his Soul. He may look upon this precious Saviour as his own for ever.

I muſt yet further go on to ſhew you, that *the Spirit witneſſeth with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God*, by working in us a true ſincere *Love to God*. Alas, *Our carnal Minds are Enmity againſt God*; and this Enmity will remain and reign in the Heart of every Unbeliever, until the Spirit of God by his powerful

powerful Influences, renews the Sinner's Nature, ſanctifies the Affections, and enables the Soul to live in the Love of God. And whenever this Change is wrought in us, we have thereby *the Witneſs of the Spirit himſelf*, to the Safety and Goodneſs of our State and Hope. Let us make ſure of this; and the Caſe is plain. All Darkneſs and Doubts will vaniſh before the clear ſhining of this Evidence. --- If upon a ſtrict Inquiſition into our own Hearts we can find, that we ſincerely admire and adore the glorious Perfections of God's excellent Nature; and uprightly endeavour univerſal Conformity to his imitable Properties; and in particular, that we endeavour to be *holy, as our Father which in Heaven is holy*: If we eſteem *God's Favour as Life*, and *his Loving-Kindneſs as better than Life*: If we love what God loveth, and hate what he hateth: If we love his Ordinances, and delight in drawing near to him: If we delight in Communion with God, and cannot content ourſelves with an empty Ordinance, without God's ſpecial Preſence with us therein: If we are greatly uneaſy, when he hides his Face from us; and the *Light of his Countenance* is the greateſt Joy, Satisfaction, and Comfort of our Souls: If our Imperfections and Sins are our Burthen, peculiarly becauſe diſhonourable to God, becauſe againſt ſuch Love and Compaſſion as he has manifeſted to us, and becauſe of the baſe Ingratitude we are therein chargeable with: If we have much at Heart the Flouriſhing and Proſperity of his Kingdom and Intereſt in the World, and exert ourſelves with Diligence in our reſpective Stations to promote it: If herein we labour *to glorify our heavenly Father, by bearing much Fruit*: If we love his Image, where ever we ſee it; and manifeſt *our abiding in his Love*, by a conſtant Endeavour to *keep his Commandments*: In a Word, If we cannot reſt contented with our Defects and Imperfections in any of theſe Inſtances, but greatly lament them before

God, and mourn all our want of Conformity to him, all our want of Affection and Devotion to him, and all our want of Communion with him: Then we may conclude we have the *Witneſs in ourſelves*, that we are the Children of God.---- Can theſe Things be the Productions of Nature? Are theſe the Fruits of that Fountain of Enmity to God, which we have formerly experienced in our own Hearts? No, It cannot be! *The Spirit himſelf* has wrought theſe gracious Affections and Diſpoſitions in our Souls. And he thereby gives an inconteſtable Evidence of our renewed Natures. If *we love him, it is becauſe he has firſt loved us*, 1 Joh. iv. 19--- O that all my Hearers could upon good Grounds take the Comfort of what has been ſaid! But alas! there is juſt Cauſe to fear, that the greateſt Part of them are *Lovers of themſelves*, and not of God; Lovers of their Luſts and ſinful Pleaſures, Lovers of the World, Neglecters of Godlineſs; or at the beſt but formal Profeſſors: and therefore whatever their Hopes and Expectations are, they can have *no Part or Lot in this Matter*. Theſe do not *love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; and therefore muſt be *Anathema Maranatha*, accurſed when the Lord comes, 1 *Cor.* xvi. 22.--Oh how different are theſe two Sorts of Perſons; and how very different ought their Views and Expectations to be!

I muſt furthermore proceed to ſhew you, that the *Spirit of God beareth Witneſs with our Spirit*, to our Adoption, and to our Intereſt in the Favour of God, by giving us *a Love to his Children*. We read 1 Joh iii 14 *We know that we are paſſed from Death to Life, becauſe we love the Brethren*. This cannot imply, that a natural Affection to the Children of God, becauſe of any Relation to 'em, or any perſonal Friendſhip, or becauſe of their Kindneſs to us, their good Neighbourhood, or the like, is an Evidence of our Sanctification. Nor on the other Hand,

Hand, does it imply, that as an Evidence of our Adoption, we muſt love or approve the Faults and Miſtakes, the Errors and Imperfections of thoſe whom we eſteem the Children of God. But it implies, that if we love the Perſons, and eſpecially the gracious Qalifications of thoſe whom we have Reaſon to conclude the Children of God, for his Sake; if we love the Image of Chriſt wherever we ſee it, or wherever we think we ſee it (for there can be no infallible certainty in this Caſe) if we love the Brethren as Brethren, love their Company, love Communion and Fellowſhip with them in religious Exerciſes; and love an Imitation of them, labour after a Conformity to them in their Graces, their Piety, and vertuous Demeanour; it is a Witneſs for us, that we are born of God. *The Spirit himſelf* has wrought theſe gracious Affections in us. We were naturally in love with Sinners; and how comes it to paſs, that their ſinful Practices & their ſinful Company and Fellowſhip become ſo grievous & burdenſome to us? On the other Hand, we are naturally full of Enmity to the gracious Attainments, ſpiritual Diſpoſitions, and religious Lives of the Saints; and how come they to be ſo delightful to us now? How come they to be our only choſen Companions? How come they to appear to us the only excellent ones of the Earth? How come we not only to love their Perſons, but their Piety; and to be transform'd into the like ſpiritual Affections, Diſpoſitions, and Converſations, which were before ſo contrary to us? Is it not moſt evident, that this Change is from *the Spirit himſelf*; and that he himſelf does hereby *bear Witneſs*, that we are among *the Children of God*, having the ſame ſanctified Habit of Soul, that we ſo highly value and eſteem in them? This certainly muſt be the Caſe; and they that find theſe Qualifications in themſelves, ſhould take the Comfort of them; while others (poor Souls!) are like to ſpend their Eternity with ſuch Companions

as are moſt agreeable to them now, but will prove their Tormentors in the End.

I go on to add, that the *Spirit beareth Witneſs with our Spirit*, by giving us a *Victory over the World*; and by making us *ſpiritually minded*. We are naturally *of the Earth earthy*; and we *mind earthly Things*. Our Cares, Thoughts, and Affections are chiefly exerciſed about, and in a great Meaſure limited to, the Affairs and Intereſts of Time and Senſe. This we have found by Experience. And is it otherwiſe with us now? Does the World ſhrink to nothing in our Sight, when compar'd with the Favour of God, and the Concerns of a future State? Do *we look, not to the Things which are ſeen and temporal; but to thoſe Things that are unſeen and eternal?* Are theſe Things the Subjects of our principal Care and Concern, of our chief Affections, Meditations, and Purſuits? Are theſe the firſt and the laſt with us? Do we endeavour ſo to *uſe the World, as not to abuſe it*; and to *have our Converſation in Heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt?* Is it our chief Concern to ſecure a better World than this; and to *lay up a good Foundation againſt the Time to come, that we may lay hold on eternal Life?* Do we take more Delight in the Service of God, than in the Pleaſures of Senſe; and when others are ſaying, *Who will ſhew us any Good!* do we rejoyce more *in the Light of God's Countenance, than* they do *when their Corn, and Wine, and Oil increaſe?* Whence then comes this great & wonderful Change? The Anſwer is prepared for us: It is becauſe *we are riſen with Chriſt*, that we *ſeek thoſe Things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth at the Right Hand of God*. It is becauſe *we are dead, and our Life is hid with Chriſt in God*, that *we ſet our Affections on Things above; and not on Things on the Earth.* (Col. iii. 1, 2, 3) It is *the Spirit himſelf* that has thus raiſed us above ſenſible and worldly Views; and he thereby bear-

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eth Witneſs for us, that *to be* thus *ſpiritually minded is Life and Peace.* (Rom. viii. 6.) --- And now, my Brethren! if you can find upon a ſerious and impartial Search into your own Hearts, that you have thus *overcome the World*, that you thus *mind the Things of the Spirit*, and that in the midſt of your worldly Incumbrances and neceſſary Concerns, your Hearts and Affections are raiſed above the World and it's Enjoyments; If you can find, that you are out of your Element while neceſſarily intangled with worldly Things; you may expect the Acceptance and Approbation of your Judge: when thoſe *who mind earthly Things*, will have *their End Deſtruction*, and will receive a dreadful Conviction, that they have ſo *loved the World, and the Things of the World*, as that *the Love of the Father was not in them.*

I muſt once more ſubjoin, that the *Spirit beareth Witneſs with our Spirit*, by being in us a *Spirit of Supplication.* Prayer is the very Breath & vital Air of a Child of God. No ſooner is *Saul* converted, but the next News is, *Behold, he prayeth!* He doubtleſs had pray'd as a *Phariſee* before; but now as a *Chriſtian.* He might before have offered many formal and hypocritical Prayers to God; but now he prays in Faith and Sincerity. And thus every one that is truly converted to God, employs himſelf with a ſpecial Diligence and Delight in this Duty of Prayer. He prays, not only to quiet his Conſcience; but that in this delightful Ordinance he may obtain *Fellowſhip with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* He prays, that he may thereby get more Victory over his Corruptions, more Evidences of God's Favour, more of the gracious Influences of God's Spirit; and be ripen'd for more near intimate and eternal Communion with God. Real Saints can't content themſelves with a bare Performance of the external Duty. They can't (as before their Converſion) quiet themſelves by

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flattering God with their Lips, and lying to him with their Tongues, when their Hearts are far from him. But they *follow hard after God; their Hearts burn within them, and pant after God, the living God*; after his gracious Preſence with them in the Duty. And tho' they often find Occaſion to complain of the deadneſs of their Hearts, and the wandring of their Thoughts and Affections in their neareſt Approaches to God; This is their greateſt Burthen, and gives them Pain and Diſtreſs, like a Bone out of Joynt. This will quicken them to more Earneſtneſs and Diligence in their Addreſſes to God. In this Caſe *their Deſire is before God, and their Groaning is not hid from him*, that when their *Souls thus cleave to the Duſt, he would quicken them according to his Word.*

And now, my dear Friends! Is this your Caſe? Have you this Delight in Prayer? Have you theſe holy Ends in performing it? Can you call God for your *Witneſs, that you ſerve him with your Spirit* in this Ordinance? Are your Affections engaged, and your Graces exerciſed, in your Applications to the Throne of Grace? Do your Enlargements in the Duty afford you the greateſt Comfort & Satisfaction; and is your want of ſuch Enlargements the Grief and Burthen of your Soul? Are you humble, as well as ſpiritual, in your Addreſſes to God? Do you come to him with deep Impreſſions of your own Nothingneſs; and with high Apprehenſions of the Fulneſs and Sufficiency that there is in Chriſt? Do you mourn for, loath and abhor that Pride and Selfiſhneſs, that is ready to creep into this Duty, even in your moſt watchful Periods? —— Happy are thoſe Souls, who have truly experienced ſuch Attainments. This is not a Production of Nature; but proceedeth from *the Spirit himſelf.* It is from the *Spirit of Adoption*, that they are thus able to *cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit helpeth their Infirmities; for they know not what they ſhould pray for as they ought: but the Spirit himſelf maketh Interceſſion*

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for them with Groanings which cannot be uttered. (Rom. viii. 26) —— But then on the contrary, to what Purpoſe are the dead, dull, and hypocritical Prayers of thoſe, that reſt in a meer Round of Duty; and raiſe their Hopes of Salvation from their ſuperficial Performances? *When theſe ſpread forth their Hands, God will hide his Eyes; and when they make many Prayers, he will not hear.* (Iſai. i. 15)

Thus I have in ſome particular Inſtances ſet before you, how *the Spirit himſelf beareth Witneſs* to our Adoption, by his ordinary ſanctifying Operations.

But you will now perhaps be ready to inquire, *How ſhall we know that we are not deceived?* Many have flattered themſelves in their own Eyes, imagining themſelves poſſeſs'd of theſe Attainments, when really they had them not; and we are as liable to be deceived as others. What therefore ſhall we do, that we may not be fatally and eternally aſhamed of our Hope?---- I anſwer; You muſt not only ſeriouſly, impartially, and frequently *examine your ſelves*, whether you have theſe Characters of the Children of God in your Souls: but muſt depend upon *the Spirit himſelf* to give you the Evidences of it. For he muſt not only work theſe Qualifications in your Souls; but alſo give you the happy Diſcovery that they are there, and keep you from a fatal Miſtake about them. To him therefore you muſt repair with moſt earneſt and conſtant Application, in ſuch Language as that (Pſal. cxxxix. 23,24) *Search me, O God, and know my Heart; try me, and know my Thoughts, and ſee if there be any wicked Way in me; and lead me in the Way everlaſting.*---- And now I'm prepar'd to ſay, in the next Place,

2. The *Spirit of God* doth ſometimes *bear Witneſs*, in an IMMEDIATE and more EXTRAORDINARY Way, *to the*

the Adoption of his Children.——And here I muſt confeſs, I am at once nonplus'd, in any Attempt to deſcribe the unſpeakable Light and Joy, that flows from this wonderful *Love of God ſhed abroad in the Heart* of a Believer, *by the Holy Ghoſt.* (This is a *new Name written, which no Man knoweth, ſaving he that receiveth it.* (Rev. ii. 17.) As no Idea of ſenſible Objects can poſſibly be communicated to thoſe that have not the proper Senſes to perceive them; ſo neither can any juſt Conceptions of this *Fellowſhip of the Spirit*, this *Joy of the Holy Ghoſt*, be communicated to any but to thoſe that have had the happy Experience of it in themſelves. Thence it is, that ſome Perſons from enthuſiaſtick Heats, from working up their animal Affections and Paſſions, or elſe from diabolical Deluſions, have pretended to theſe immediate Influences of the Spirit of God, where the Conſequence has evidently ſhewn, they have been *Strangers, that have never intermedled with theſe* Divine *Joys.* This *Witneſs of the Spirit* is nevertheleſs diſtinguiſhable from any Counterfeits, or falſe Pretences whatſoever, not only by *its own Light*, which diſpels all Doubts and Darkneſs of the Soul, and gives it an Earneſt and Foretaſte of its future Bleſſedneſs: But it may be alſo diſtinguiſh'd by the *concomitant Graces* of the Holy Spirit. If the Perſon thus ſignally favoured of God, has *before* experienced the ordinary Influences of the Grace of God, *renewing* his Nature, *enlightning* his Mind, and *ſanctifying* his Heart; if this bleſſed Experience *humbles* the Soul at God's Foot, in an abaſing Senſe of his own Vileneſs and Unworthineſs, and in an adoring View of God's diſtinguiſhing Mercy and Love to ſuch a baſe and worthleſs Worm; if this *purifies the Heart*, and *purges the Conſcience from dead Works to ſerve the living God*; if this mortifies remaining Luſts, makes the Affections more ſpiritual and heavenly, excites more ardent breathings after the eternal Inheritance; and inkindles a greater Zeal

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for the Glory of God, as the higheſt End; and if this be attained in a *Way of Duty*; and makes all the *Ordinances* of God more pleaſant to the Soul; if it increaſes Devotion to God, and Benignity to Men: I ſay, if the Caſe be thus with any, he hath doubtleſs *the Witneſs of the Spirit himſelf*, and may well rejoyce *with Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory.* — But all Pretences to this extraordinary *Witneſs of the Spirit*, which are *not* accompanied with theſe gracious Diſpoſitions of Mind, are falſe and counterfeit, and are like to end in a dreadful Diſappointment.

But before I diſmiſs this Head, I muſt remember my Promiſe; and take Time briefly to conſider *whether* all *the Children of God have a clear and ſatisfying Evidence of their Adoption, and whether the Evidence of a ſanctified State be abſolutely neceſſary to the Truth of Grace.*

In Anſwer to this I would firſt obſerve, that the Influences of the Spirit of God upon our Souls are in themſelves *ſenſible* or *perceptible* Operations; that they may certainly be felt and perceived by all that have had them. It is impoſſible (for Inſtance) for any Perſon at an Age of Obſervation to be ignorant of his *Convictions*, if he has been brought out of a State of carnal Security, and had any lively Impreſſions of his Guilt and Danger. It is impoſſible but he muſt feel the *humbling* Senſe of his own Unworthineſs, Impotence, and Deſert of God's Wrath, if ever he has been brought out of himſelf to the Footſtool of God's Sovereignty. It is impoſſible but he muſt know the *Actings of his own Mind*, when he has exerciſed *Repentance* toward God, and *Faith* toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. It is impoſſible but he muſt know the *Comforts* which he has enjoy'd, if he hath found *Peace in Believing*. And it is impoſſible but he muſt know the *Fruits* of his Faith and Hope in the Mortification of his Luſts,

and the Renovation of his Heart and Life. Theſe Things are (I think) certain, even to Demonſtration. How vain therefore is the Confidence, and how falſe the Peace, of thoſe that know nothing of theſe Things, and who have never *felt* the Agency of the Spirit of God, *creating them anew in Chriſt Jeſus!*

But all this notwithſtanding, there are doubtleſs many that have really felt all theſe divine Influences in their Souls, who remain nevertheleſs *uncertain of their Converſion.* Sometimes the humbling *Views* of their own *Unworthineſs* make them afraid to *apply* the Comfort to their Souls, that *belongs* to them, and that would reſult from the manifeſt Marks of Grace, which they could not but ſee, did they not think it was too good News for them, and what they dare not flatter themſelves with. Sometimes the actual *Prevalence of their Corruptions* darkens all their Hopes; and they are ready to imagine their Imperfections inconſiſtent with a State of Grace. They know it is hard to diſtinguiſh between the *Remains* of Sin in the Children of God, and the *Reign* of Sin in Unbelievers; and they are afraid of being deceived; and therefore dare not conclude in their own Favour. They know that there's an Eternity depending, and if they are deceived, it may prove an eternal Diſappointment. — Sometimes a Senſe of the *Deceitfulneſs of their own Hearts* renders all their Evidences doubtful; and makes them afraid peremptorily to conclude upon what they even ſee and feel. They can't but acknowledge, that they have experienced what *looks like* Grace in their Souls: But their Hearts being ſo deceitful, they dare not truſt them. Others have been deceived; and they are equally liable to the ſame Miſtakes that have ruined ſo many others; and they dread to think what would become of their Souls for ever, if *a deceived Heart ſhould turn them aſide*, and *they ſhould be found with a Lie in their right Hand.* —— Sometimes the frequent

quent Return of *Deadneſs* and *Dulneſs in Duty*, keep them under *a Spirit of Bondage* They are afraid whether this can be conſiſtent with a ſanctified State; and are therefore afraid, that what they have experienced, has been but counterfeit Grace --- Sometimes a *melancholy* Habit of *Body* keeps the Believer under an unhappy Courſe of Darkneſs & Fear, and prompts him unreaſonably to argue againſt himſelf. —Sometimes one and ſometimes another of theſe Difficulties may ariſe in the Mind of a ſincere Chriſtian; and perhaps all of them together, with many others of the like Kind, may conſpire to darken his Evidences, and bring him into a moſt uncomfortable Suſpence about his ſpiritual State.

Whoever therefore teach ſuch Doctrine, that every converted Perſon muſt neceſſarily know that he is converted, do *offend againſt the Generation of God's Children*, go contrary to the conſtant Doctrine of the moſt eminent Proteſtant Divines from the Reformation to this Day, and contrary to the bleſſed Oracles of Truth. — How ſad, how dark and melancholy does *Heman* repreſent his Caſe, in *Pſalm* 88th thro'-out? How does he complain, that his *Soul was full of Troubles*; that *he was laid in the loweſt Pit, in Darkneſs, in the Deeps*; that *God's fierce Wrath went over him*; *and his Terrors had cut him off*; and the like? And this was not a ſudden or ſhort Deſertion; but *he had been thus afflicted and ready to die from his Youth up.* Now why may it not be as well ſuppoſed, that true Believers may in theſe Days meet with the ſame Trials? To whom but ſuch doubting Believers, is that Exhortation given (Iſai. l. 10) *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the Voice of his Servant, that walketh in Darkneſs and hath no Light? Let him truſt in the Name of the Lord, & ſtay upon his God.* Chriſt came *to deliver ſuch, who through fear of Death, were all their Life Time ſubject to Bondage.* (Heb. ii. 15.) Read alſo to the ſame Purpoſe the Beginning of the 32d, with the Beginning of the 38th

and the 77th *Pſalms*; and it will appear, that many *which ſow in Tears, ſhall reap in Joy; and they who go forth weeping, bearing precious Seed, ſhall come again rejoycing, bringing their Sheaves with them*, (according to *Pſal.* cxxvi. 5,6.—— But it's Time I ſhould make ſome more particular APPLICATION of what you have heard. And

1. *This teaches us the* Folly *of thoſe, that content themſelves without clear and ſure Evidences of their Sanctification and Adoption.* The moſt of our Profeſſors ſeem to be eaſy and quiet with a general Hope of Salvation, without any ſpecial Evidences of their Title to it. They ſeem to ſuppoſe, that Aſſurance is not attainable, or at leaſt that it is not attainable by them; and therefore ſatisfy themſelves with Expectations of Acceptance with God, they don't know why. But conſider (I entreat you, my dear Brethren) what the Conſequence will be, if you are miſtaken. What Comfort will it be to you, if in the Day of Judgment you ſhould be found at the *left Hand* of Chriſt, to ſay, "I expected better Things than this; alaſs! I never thought it would have come to this; I am dreadfully diſappointed." What Comfort will it afford you, to plead at that Bar, that you have *eaten and drank in Chriſt's Preſence, and that he has taught in your Streets*, if you muſt then be rejected of your LORD, and meet with that dreadful Repulſe from him, *I tell you, I know you not whence you are, Depart from me all ye Workers of Iniquity!* (Luke xiii. 27) Can you be eaſy and ſecure, when you don't know but you muſt be damn'd to all Eternity; when you don't know but *Weeping*, and *Wailing*, and *Gnaſhing of Teeth* under the unutterable Anguiſh of God's terrible Indignation, muſt be your eternal Portion. Would you be ſatisfied with no better Security of a Title to your Houſes and Lands? Can you in theſe Caſes be contented with a general Hope, that no Body will take them

them from you, while you don't know that you have any Claim that will ſecure your Poſſeſſion? And are not your Souls and your Eternity (my dear Friends) of infinitely more Conſequence and Concern, than theſe vaniſhing Treaſures, which muſt periſh with the uſing. O why (dear Souls!) why will you reſt in ſuch a dreadful Uncertainty? What may be, may not be; and there is infinite Danger, that your preſent Uncertainty of Salvation, will iſſue in an abſolute Certainty of your miſſing Heaven, and falling into eternal Perdition.

2. *This ſhews us the* dreadful *and* amazing Condition *of all thoſe, who cannot but know, that they have never yet experienced the ſanctifying Influences of the Spirit of God in their Souls.* Without Breach of Charity, I am afraid, that this is the State of the greateſt Part of this numerous Audience. I would appeal to your own Conſciences; and ſummon them in the Name and Fear of God, to deal impartially with you, and to determine, whether this be not truly your Caſe. And if it be, what an aſtoniſhing Caſe is it! Do you know that you are *yet in your Sins*, that you are under the *Power of Satan*, under the *Condemnation* of the Law, under the *Wrath* of the eternal God; and under a dreadful expoſedneſs to the Horrors of his infinite & eternal Vengeance? Do you know, that *there is but a Step between you and Death*, between you and the *Fire that ſhall never be quenched?* Do you know, if you ſhould be ſuddenly ſnatch'd out of the World in your preſent Condition, that there would be no Hope, no Help, no Poſſibility of recovering your loſt Soul to all Eternity? And can you ſleep in ſuch a State as this? Can you reſt ſecure, when you are *condemn'd already*, and *the Wrath of God abideth on you?* What are your Hearts made of! *Who hath bewitched you*, that you can thus venture upon *the thick Boſſes of God's Buckler!* Is Damnation ſo light a Matter; that you can fearleſly

leſly ruſh upon it? *Can your Hearts endure, or your Hands be ſtrong, when the Lord ſhall deal with you? O conſider this, you that forget God, leſt he tear you in Pieces; and there be none to deliver! Awake, you that ſleep; and ariſe from the Dead, that Chriſt may give you Light!*

3. I would improve this Subject by way of earneſt *Exhortation* to every one, to apply yourſelves with the utmoſt Concern and Induſtry, in all poſſible Endeavours to obtain this *Witneſs of the Spirit himſelf, that you are the Children of God.* O my Brethren, be intreated to *give Diligence, to make your Calling and Election ſure!* How much Comfort and unſpeakable Joy would this bleſſed Attainment afford your Souls! How would it fill you with admiring and adoring Views of the Love of God in Chriſt Jeſus to you! How would it quicken you in your ſpiritual Courſe, mortify your Corruptions, render all the Ordinances of God delightful to you; all the Ways of Wiſdom Pleaſantneſs, and all her Paths Peace! What Safety, as well as Comfort, would redound to your Souls, from your being thus *ſealed by the bleſſed Spirit, unto the Day of Redemption!* --- Attend therefore to the following Directions and Advices.

1. Take it for granted, that this Witneſs of the Spirit is *attainable.* Others have attained it: And why may not you, as well as others? If you do not obtain this bleſſed Priviledge, the Fault muſt be in your ſelves Be not therefore diſcouraged in the Attempt: but preſs after it with Hope and unfainting Expectation. God would not have made it your Duty to ſeek the Witneſs of your Adoption, if ſuch Aſſurance were not to be hoped for. I am afraid that many loſe this bleſſed Priviledge and Comfort, by giving up the Caſe as hopeleſs, and ſitting down in Deſpair.

2. If you would obtain this *Witneſs of the Spirit,* ſtrive for it in *all the Ways of God's Appointment.* In this

thiis Caſe it is eminently true, that *the diligent Hand maketh Rich.* If you are ſlothful & remiſs, you muſt expect to be dark and doubtful about your State. But *up and be doing*; and you may hope that *the Lord will be with you.* Be in earneſt in attending upon all the Means of Grace & Life; and wreſtle with God, with inſatiable Deſire & Importunity, that he would *lift up the Light of his Countenance* upon your Souls; and give you the *Spirit of Adoption.* And be not diſcouraged, if you don't preſently find Succeſs; but ſtill *follow on to know and ſeek the Lord.*

3. Be conſtant in ſolemn *Self-Examination.* Make it a daily Buſineſs to *examine your Selves, whether you be in the Faith.* Search & try whether you have theſe gracious Influences of the Spirit in your Soul, or not. Set apart Time on purpoſe. You will do well to take the Help and Aſſiſtance of ſome good Book, that moſt plainly and clearly ſets the genuine Marks of the new Creature before you; and to your Self-Examination join fervent Prayer, that God would graciouſly ſhew you your State as it is. In this Way a truly ſanctified Perſon will be like to diſcover that he is ſuch.

4 Be very *watchful.* Watch over your Hearts, your Thoughts & Affections. Watch over your Converſations. Watch over your Duties. *Watch and pray, that you enter not into Temptation.* Watch leſt the Prevalence of your Corruptions, the Formality of your Duties, the deadneſs of your Spirits, and the decay of your Graces, intercept the Light of God's Countenance, and leave your Souls in Darkneſs and Diſtreſs.

5 Labour to evidence the *Truth of Grace* in your Hearts, by the *preſent Exerciſe of it.* Thus, for Inſtance, if you doubt the ſincerity of your *Repentance*, go roundly to work with your Souls: Labour now to get them under the Power of Conviction, & a thorow Humiliation: Review your Sins both of Nature and Practice: Confeſs 'em to God with Shame & Sorrow;

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Cry for Pardon & Cleansing in the Blood of Christ: Resolve against 'em, & renounce 'em for ever: And be importunate with Him, who is exalted at God's Right Hand for that End, that He would give you *Repentance unto Life.* --- If you doubt the sincerity of your *Faith*, endeavour now to commit your Soul to Christ, to come empty-handed to him, and to depend upon him only for Justification & Life. Endeavour to see the Fulness & Sufficiency there is in him; and so chearfully venture your Soul and your Eternity in his Hands.---If you doubt the sincerity of your *Love* to God, endeavour now to raise your Affections to him; and to make it sure to your selves that you love him, by your Love to his Ordinances, and to his People, by your seeking Communion with him, by your studying a Conformity to his Will, and by your imitating of Him as dear Children. In this Road, you gain Ground by going it over again.

Finally, *Acknowledge the Evidences* of your gracious State so far as you *see* them. As on the one Hand, you should be awfully careful not to take up with false Appearances and counterfeit Graces, lest you be ashamed of your Hope: So on the other Hand, you must take Care not to deny God the Glory, and your selves the Comfort, of his gracious Operations in your Souls. Don't conclude, by a false Humility, that this *Witness of the Spirit*, is a Priviledge too great and good for you to pretend to; and that you dare not flatter your selves with having such peculiar and distinguishing Attainments; but rather let this blessed Discovery inflame your Souls to the highest Elevations of Gratitude, Love, and Praise; and now begin the joyful Song, that shall be your eternal Employment, *To him that has loved you and washed you from your Sins in his own Blood, and hath made you Kings & Priests to God and his Father:*

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To Him be Glory & Dominion for ever & ever. AMEN.

FINIS.